(a) whether Government are planning to do away with structured course system in a major move to revamp higher education in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether extensive consultations are proposed to be held with educational experts and specialists in the field and with the various State Governments in the matter before taking a final decision; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. VALLABHBHAI RAMJIBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) There is no plan to do away with the structured course system in the country. However, revamping of higher education is a process, which is being undertaken by Government continuously.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Drop in research and development expenditure

399. SHRI R.R GOENKA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for drop in R and D expenditure from 0.85 per cent in 1990 to 0.66 per cent of GDP now;

(b) to what extent has it hurt our competitiveness in the external market; and

(c) what action Government propose to take to achieve the target of 2 per cent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. VALLABHBHAI RAMJIBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) The Research and Development (R&D) expenditure as percentage of Gross National Product has gone up from 0.79% in 1990-91 to 0.81 % in 1998-99.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In addition to encouraging investment in R and D, both in industry and institutions, the 10th Plan Science andTechnology outlay for scientific agencies has increased to Rs. 25243.00 Crores from Rs. 12022.17 Crores in 9th Plan.